

**Study of Current Area Visitors:
Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen 2007**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Minnesota between 2005 and 2006, 41 million visitors spent \$11.786 billion (Davidson-Peterson, 2006). Of course, regional differences likely exist among these visitors and exploring this variation can inform tourism planning and development and subsequently enhance visitor experiences and destination revenue. The University of Minnesota Tourism Center and Explore Minnesota Tourism began partnering in 2000 to identify community and regional level travel data. This project continues those efforts with a focus on Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen. Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen is located in West Central Minnesota and includes communities beyond Detroit Lakes and Mahnomen and includes White Earth and Frazee.

Methods

An on-site questionnaire was administered to systematically selected and self-identified visitors at a variety of businesses serving visitors in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area. Sampling occurred at predetermined sites, randomly assigned, throughout a twelve-month period from July 2006-July 2007. A total of 650 people identified themselves as visitors and 559 useable questionnaires were completed, which resulted in an 86.0% effective compliance rate. Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned and checked in SPSS version 12.0.

Results

Demographics

Respondents were typically baby boomers with high-income status. Respondents reported an average age of 46.6 years (range 18 to 87 years). The most frequently cited income was between \$50,000 and \$74,999 (25.3%). Respondents' household composition was predominately couples with grown children (33.3%) or couples with children younger than 18 years of age (28.0%).

Primary Destination and Reason for Travel

More than two thirds of respondents indicated Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen was their primary destination (89.3%). Among the communities listed as potential destinations, the most frequently cited was Detroit Lakes (78.4%). More than a third (35.9%) indicated their primary reason for travel was for pleasure or recreation.

Visitation History, Information Sources, and Trip Planning

A majority of respondents were repeat visitors (84.9%). Information sources rated most important for creating awareness of the area and trip planning were previous visit, recommendation from friend or relative, and the Internet. Visitors typically planned their trip and sought accommodations between ten and eleven weeks prior to the trip.

Important Destination Features

Among more than forty destination features provided, the most important features in choosing a place to visit were a festival or special event, scenic drives, entertainment/nightlife, fall colors, lots of activities/attractions, the natural environment, and sightseeing. In Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen, the features most frequently experienced were festival or special event (49.2%),

entertainment/ nightlife (46.5%), and small town feel (42.9%). Visitors were satisfied with the majority of destination features they experienced.

Travel Characteristics

Respondents averaged four people per travel party (\bar{M} =3.8) and were in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area an average of three nights (\bar{M} =3.1). Predominantly, respondents indicated an overnight stay in a hotel (33.3%). On average, in the previous 24-hour time period, respondents individually spent the most on lodging (\bar{M} =\$105.54). Restaurant food and beverages accounted for the second highest expenditure category, with an average of \$48.33.

Intentions to Return to Region

A majority of respondents indicated they will probably or definitely return within the next year (85.7%) or the next five years (90.8%).

Visitor Profiles

To delineate and describe visitors, factor analysis of destination feature importance items was conducted. This analysis, which found statistical commonality among the destination features, created three factors which were named: nature/cultural, active recreation, and motors and sports. Nature/culture and motors and sports were more important to repeat than first time visitors. Common among the groups was the importance of newspaper or magazine ads for destination awareness. Different was the Internet, whereby active recreation was more strongly correlated than the other factors.

Discussion

Visitors in the 2006-2007 time frame to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen are comparable to regional visitors (Davidson-Peterson, 2006) in that they are boomers who travel in party sizes of three people for about three nights. Also like regional visitors, respondents were interested in a variety of experiences.

Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen attracts a range of visitors who are generally satisfied with their experiences, as evidenced by their satisfaction level, repeat visitation, and intention to return. Such a satisfied base is noteworthy as travelers use recommendations from friends and families so frequently when they travel. The high percent of repeat visitors can also challenge a destination to ensure the product and experiences retain their attractiveness but not stagnate. Novelty within the experience may be particularly important with the baby boomer market.

Opportunities to extend the tourism benefits include capitalizing on the important outdoor recreation experiences deemed important by respondents, extending trip length, targeted marketing, and increased spring marketing. Consideration to expanding conference opportunities in the area may be worthwhile.

To address the important attributes in a destination as well as possibly extend trip lengths, additional attention to nature based opportunities appears in order. Visitors indicated nature based opportunities were important to destination choices. Among the top ten most important features, six were nature based. All of which approximately one third or less of visitors

experienced or participated in during their trip. Reasons for this could include a lack of awareness or a lack of time. As such, increasing awareness of the variety of experiences and enticing visitors to extend their current stay or return to participate in them may be of value. Any such efforts to increase awareness should obviously pay attention to the travel information sources used for trip awareness and planning, as well as those communication mediums for the markets of interest (nature/cultural, active recreation, and/or motor & sports).

Another possible venue to lengthen visitor stays is the creation or enhanced awareness of packages. Certainly tying in the current experiences of small town feel and scenic drives with important, but unrealized experiences such as visits to parks and water-based recreation is feasible. Ideas such as nature meanders (comparable to the Meander Art Crawl), scavenger hunts within the region or targeted spring wildlife opportunities may meet visitor needs and provide revenue in the shoulder seasons. Further, targeting both family and couple getaway opportunities would be advantageous to address the current travel groups.

To maximize visitor spending, ensuring marketing of recreational and shopping opportunities is suggested. For instance, less than half of respondents reported expenditures in the recreation category, which included attractions, entertainment, and casinos. Given the importance of recreational experiences to visitors and the number of opportunities in the area, an opportunity to increase expenditures exists.

An initial comparison of 2006 to 2001 visitors to the Detroit Lakes area indicates that the majority of demographic and trip characteristics are largely unchanged. Variable information that has changed includes length of stay, primary reason for visit, and planning time frame. Length of stay has increased slightly with the addition of about one-half of a day. Leisure remains the primary reason for visit and the number of respondents indicating this has increased since 2001. The planning time frame has decreased one to two weeks (now about 10 weeks). Also, the Internet appears to have moved to a much more important role for both trip planning and awareness.

Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen possesses many attractive features that are also important to visitors. Capitalizing on these features by increasing awareness and opportunities to experience them can lead to increased economic impacts and heightened visitor experiences.

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INTRODUCTION

In Minnesota, 41 million visitors spent \$11.786 billion (Davidson-Peterson, 2006a). Regional differences likely exist in these visitors and exploring this variation informs tourism planning and development. Statewide data is typically segmented into the four regions of Explore Minnesota Tourism: North Central/West, Northeast, Metro, and Southern. While regional tourism data is available (e.g. Davidson-Peterson, 2006b), local level data is not as readily available but still desirable to inform tourism development, marketing and planning. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the consumer profile in a local area: Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen.

The University of Minnesota Tourism Center and Explore Minnesota Tourism began partnering in 2000 to identify community and regional level travel data. This project continues those efforts with a focus on Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen. Visitor demographics, preferred destination features, travel information sources, travel characteristics, expenditures, and familiarity with area were of specific interest. The study methods and results are presented below, followed by a discussion.

METHODS

An on-site questionnaire was administered to visitors to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen between July 2006 and July 2007. The methods for the questionnaire administration are presented in the following sections: study setting, questionnaire, approach, response rate, and analysis.

Study Setting

The region is located in West Central Minnesota and boasts many lakes and natural features. Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen affords visitors water based recreation, cultural attractions, multiple festivals and special events, among other nature-based and cultural attractions. Working closely with area tourism organizations, a cluster of communities were identified that comprised the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area. Communities included in the project include Detroit Lakes, Frazee, Mahnomen, and White Earth.

Questionnaire

An on-site questionnaire was developed, based on previous studies conducted in other regions, and refined with the assistance of the community partners. Questionnaire sections included trip destination, important trip features, region familiarity, trip characteristics (length of stay, accommodation type, expenditures, and group size), information sources, and demographics (Appendix A). Given that several other studies used very similar questionnaires for the same purpose, a pre-test was not conducted.

Approach

A comprehensive list of Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen businesses that serve visitors was identified as survey sites in cooperation with community partners. Interview schedules were then designed to reach a diverse cross section of current and potential visitors. Sampling occurred at

predetermined sites, randomly assigned, throughout the twelve-month study period (July 2006-July 2007). Sites consisted of accommodations, attractions, festivals or special events, retail establishments, and restaurants (See Appendix B for a full list). Interview schedules were then designed to reach a diverse cross section of visitors to obtain information from both current and potential visitors.

On site, a systematic intercept sampling approach was implemented where every third person was approached. Tourism Center field researchers then asked a few questions to ascertain whether potential respondents met the definition of visitor (self-identified, i.e. out of home community; Appendix C). If a potential respondent was identified as a visitor, they were asked to complete the on-site questionnaire.

Response Rate

A total of 1,450 parties were contacted throughout the course of the study period, of which almost half (44.8%) identified as visitors. Among the 650 self-identified visitors, a total of 561 visitors were willing to participate in the study (Appendix D, Table 1). Two questionnaires were unusable, resulting in an 86.0% effective response rate. Completed questionnaires had a relatively even distribution across the seasons, although summer had a higher completion rate (41.1%; Appendix D, Table 2). Similarly, visitors were intercepted across a range of venues. The greatest percent of visitors were captured at festivals or special events (39.7%), while fewest were contacted at restaurants (7.3%; Appendix D, Figure 1)

Analysis

Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned and checked in SPSS version 12.0. Extreme outliers were winsorized to bring highly skewed variables into usable ranges. Descriptive analysis provided means, standard deviations, and frequencies to describe the sample and provide information on variables of interest. Factor analysis and correlations were also performed on variables of interest.

RESULTS

Respondents

More than half of respondents were female and reported an average age of 46.6 years (59.4%; range 18 to 87; Appendix D, Table 3). Almost half of respondent's reported an annual household income between \$50,000-99,999 (48.3%; Appendix D, Figure 2). The remainder of respondent income was relatively evenly distributed across all income categories. A third (33.3%) of respondents indicated their household comprised of a couple with grown children, while more than a quarter of respondent households were comprised of a couple with children less than 18 years (28.0%; Appendix D, Figure 3).

Respondents' predominately traveled fewer than 200 miles. Half (50%) of respondents indicated their primary residence was between 0 and 100 miles from a centralized midpoint, specified as the Detroit Lakes zipcode (Appendix D, Figure 4). Almost a third (30%) resided 101 to 200

miles away and a tenth (11%) resided 201-500 miles away. Almost a tenth (8%) indicated they resided more than 500 miles from Detroit Lakes.

Primary Destination and Reason for Travel

A majority of respondents (89.3%) indicated Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen was their primary destination. Among the communities listed, the most frequently cited destination was Detroit Lakes (78.4%; Appendix D, Figure 5). More than a third (35.9%) indicated their primary reason for travel was for pleasure or recreation (Appendix D, Figure 6). The second most frequently cited reason for travel was festival or special event (28.4%). The least cited reasons for travel were personal: wedding, medical or reunion (2.5%), 'other' (2.5%) and education or learning (0.0%).

Visitation History and Trip Planning

A majority of respondents were repeat visitors (84.9%; Appendix D; Figure 7). However, among new visitors, almost two thirds stated their trip in Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen was exactly what they expected (62.1%), while the other third specified the trip exceeded their expectations (36.4%). Among repeat visitors, respondents most frequent initial exposure to the area was either through a festival or special event (25.2%), visiting friends and relatives (23.6%) or being born or raised in the area (20.0%; Appendix D; Figure 8). Repeat visitors averaged five trips to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen in the previous year ($\bar{M}=5.1$) and had been visiting the area for more than fifteen years ($\bar{M}=15.9$).

Respondents typically planned their trip ten to eleven weeks prior to travel ($\bar{M}=74.4$ days). Of those who made lodging reservations, advance reservations were typically made within a similar timeframe ($\bar{M}=79.2$ days).

With regard to creating an awareness of the area and planning for the trip, information sources rated most important were previous visit, recommendation from friend or relative, and the Internet (Appendix D, Table 4).

Important Destination Features

Among more than 40 destination features provided, the most important in choosing a place to visit were festival or special event ($\bar{M}=3.1$), scenic drives ($\bar{M}=3.1$), entertainment/nightlife ($\bar{M}=3.0$), fall colors ($\bar{M}=3.0$), lots of activities/attractions ($\bar{M}=3.0$), natural environment ($\bar{M}=3.0$), and sightseeing ($\bar{M}=3.0$; Appendix D, Table 5). The least important features were American Indian heritage ($\bar{M}=1.5$) and BMX racing ($\bar{M}=1.3$).

When asked if these features were experienced in Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen, the most frequently cited were a festival or special event (49.2%), entertainment/nightlife (46.5%), and small town feel (42.9%). The features respondents were the least likely to have experienced were cross-country skiing (1.1%) and BMX racing (0.9%).

Visitors were generally satisfied with their experiences in Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen. Among the top ten most experienced features, each had a mean satisfaction rating above 3.1 (rated on a scale from 1 to 4, where 1=not at all satisfied and 4=very satisfied). Of all the features provided, only five had satisfaction ratings below three.

Travel Characteristics

Respondents averaged four people per travel party (\underline{M} =3.8), with a range of one to ten. Fewer than one tenth of respondents indicated their travel party consisted of international visitors (5.1%). Overall, respondents were away from home an average of two to three nights (\underline{M} =2.6). Those who spent the night in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area, respondents stayed in the area an average of three nights (\underline{M} =3.1).

A third of respondents (33.3%) indicated an overnight stay in a hotel, with an average stay of two nights (\underline{M} =2.0; Appendix D; Table 6). A campground accounted for the second most cited accommodation type (11.8%), with an average stay of four nights (\underline{M} =3.7). The least frequently specified accommodation types were 'other' (2.0%) and B & B (0.7%).

On average, in the previous 24-hour time period, respondents spent the most on lodging shopping (\underline{M} =\$105.54; Appendix D, Table 7). Restaurant food and beverages accounted for the second highest expenditure category, with an average of \$48.33. Respondents reported moderate spending on recreation (\underline{M} =\$39.58), transportation (\underline{M} =\$36.88), shopping (\underline{M} =\$36.74) and groceries (\underline{M} =\$30.42). Respondents spent the least amount on 'other' (\underline{M} =\$2.36) and guides/outfitting (\underline{M} =\$0.22).

Intentions to Return to Region

Overall, respondents indicated an intention to return to the area. Approximately two thirds of respondents indicated they will definitely return next year (63.1%) and an additional quarter will probably return (22.6%). Similarly, two thirds definitely intend to return within the next five years (68.7%) and two tenths (22.1%) will probably return.

Respondents were least interested in returning to the area in the winter (\underline{M} =2.7; rated on a scale from 1 to 4, where 1=not at all interested and 4=very interested) and most interested in returning during the spring (\underline{M} =3.7). Fall and summer had slightly lower interest means (\underline{M} =3.3 and 3.0, respectively).

Visitor Profiles

In an effort to further delineate and describe visitors, the 41 destination feature importance items were factor analyzed¹. Several items cross-loaded or failed to load and were dropped from the analysis. A total of 18 items remained and a three-factor structure emerged, labeled

¹ Factor analysis is a statistical procedure that can be used to analyze interrelationships among a large number of variables and used to explain these variables in terms of their common underlying dimensions (factors). The procedure essentially condenses the information contained in a number of original variables, based on patterns in the data, into a smaller set of dimensions (factors), with a minimum loss of information.

nature/cultural, motors and sports, and active recreation (\bar{M} =2.8, 2.4, and 2.3, respectively; Appendix D, Table 8). Combined these factors explained 58.7% of the variation. The destination features had reliability coefficients that ranged from .79 (active recreation) to .91 (nature/cultural). Moreover, most of the factor loadings were above .60, indicating a relatively high correlation between the factors and their items.

A comparison of new visitors and previous visitors resulted in significant differences in means among two of the factors. Specifically, repeat visitors felt nature/cultural tourism and motor and sports opportunities were more important than first time visitors. New visitors rated the importance of the nature/cultural tourism factor lower than previous visitors (\bar{M} =2.8 and 2.5, respectively; $t = -3.2$, $p < .01$). Similarly, motors and sports importance was rated lower among new visitors than previous visitors (\bar{M} =2.4 and 1.9, respectively; $t = -4.0$, $p < .001$).

Significant correlations emerged between the factors and the information sources used to create an awareness of the area (Appendix D, Table 9). All of the information sources ratings were significantly correlated with motors and sports, active recreation, and nature/cultural tourism.

DISCUSSION

Visitors in the 2006-2007 time frame to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen are comparable to regional visitors (Davidson-Peterson, 2006) in that they are boomers who travel in party sizes of three people for about three nights. Also like regional visitors, respondents were interested in a variety of experiences.

Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen attracts a range of visitors who are generally satisfied with their experiences, as evidenced by their satisfaction level, repeat visitation, and intention to return. Such a satisfied base is noteworthy as travelers use recommendations from friends and families so frequently when they travel. The high percent of repeat visitors can also challenge a destination to ensure the product and experiences retain their attractiveness but not stagnate. Novelty within the experience may be particularly important with the baby boomer market.

Opportunities to extend the tourism benefits include capitalizing on the important outdoor recreation experiences deemed important by respondents, extending trip length, targeted marketing, and increased spring marketing. Consideration to expanding conference opportunities in the area may be worthwhile.

A majority of respondents came to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen for pleasure. While visitors were generally satisfied with their experiences, a gap appears between important destination experiences and those experienced by the current travel base. While a festival or special event and nightlife were experienced among a majority of visitors, fewer engaged in important nature-based opportunities. Visitors indicated nature based opportunities were important to destination choices. Among the top ten most important features, six were nature based. All of which approximately one third or less of visitors experienced or participated in during their trip. Although this study did not investigate reasons for lack of participation, one potential explanation is that they simply are unaware of the opportunities within the area. If so, additional marketing of the outdoor opportunities is essential. Another possible explanation is that visitors

simply do not have the time to enjoy the natural features as they are caught up in other activities during their visit. If so, an opportunity exists to extend the stay or incorporate enhanced nature based opportunities in subsequent visits. Within these nature-based opportunities, attention to differentiating the marketing information and mediums for nature/cultural, motors and sports, and active recreation interest should be implemented.

Two additional market increases exist: business travel and international travel (specifically, Canada). Given the infrastructure exists and there is about one-fifth of business travel in the area, potential exists to expand business/meeting travel. Ensuring that meeting planners are aware of the opportunities, that the distance is not insurmountable and that the opportunity to get away has benefits will be essential to capturing more of this business within the region. Similarly, fewer than ten percent of travelers included international guests. While the current administrative climate may be challenging, there is a substantial market north of the Minnesota border that deserves attention. The exchange rate and border crossing procedures will influence the realization of any international tourism share.

Like the majority of travelers in Minnesota and the United States, word of mouth and the Internet were important vehicles for exposure to the area and subsequent travel planning (e.g. Gartner & Salk, 2005; Gartner & Salk, 2004). Newspaper or magazine ads also lead to increasing awareness of the destination and related opportunities. As such, marketing should target Internet and print in the format of newspapers and magazines within the marketing area. With respect to the Internet, important considerations for website development and maintenance are attention to navigational ease, such as integrated linkages, as well as attention to individual sites that are dynamic and continually updated. Ensuring that visits are high quality and satisfactory will be important so that visitors can leave with positive impressions and spread the word about the area. Certainly ensuring local residents are familiar with all of the offerings, both new and existing, is also essential such that they can inform potential visitors of available opportunities. With respect to information sources used to create awareness of the area by the important destination feature factors, none of the information sources were consistently moderately or significantly related across the factors (nature/cultural, active recreation, and motor and sports). Still, the relationships are important to consider. For motors and sports and nature/cultural tourism, previous visit and newspapers or magazine ads were the most strongly related information sources. For active recreation destination features, Internet was the most strongly related, followed by newspapers or magazine ads. These similarities and differences speak to mediums that can be used most effectively to capture various markets of interest.

Similar to regional and state data, visitor trips were of short duration —three days (Davidson-Peterson, 2006b). Efforts to lengthen visitor's stay could include enhanced exposure of area offerings, lengthening festivals or special events, as well as enhancing or continuing packages. Certainly tying in the current experiences of small town feel and scenic drives with important, but unrealized experiences, such as visits to parks and lake-based recreation is feasible. Ideas such nature meanders (comparable to the Art Meander), scavenger hunts within the region or targeted spring wildlife opportunities may meet the needs of visitors and provide revenue in the shoulder seasons. Also of interest is the bifurcated markets of those with and those without children under 18 in their household. Thus, targeting both family experiences and couple

getaway opportunities is essential. In a similar vein, shoulder season marketing is also suggested, given visitors expressed heightened interest in spring and fall return visitation.

With regard to visitor spending, lodging accounted for the highest expenditure. Restaurant food and beverages was also a high expenditure category. To maximize visitor spending, marketing recreational and shopping opportunities is suggested. For instance, fewer than half of respondents reported recreational expenditures, which included attractions, entertainment, and casinos. Further, opportunities for guiding may be available given the interest in natural opportunities and sight seeing. Given the importance of recreational experiences to visitors and the number of opportunities, there is significant opportunity to increase expenditures.

The ample festivals and special events in the area are one of many draws. It should be noted that although a large percentage of respondents were intercepted at festivals and special events, the importance of festivals and special events was found among all types of sites surveyed. Similarly, the indication of festivals and special events as the primary reason for travel was found at all types of sites surveyed. When comparing 2001 and 2006 data, results indicate that 2001 visitors were most interested in receiving emails about festivals/events.

An initial comparison of 2006 to 2001 visitors to the Detroit Lakes area indicates that the majority of demographic and trip characteristics are largely unchanged. Variable information that has changed includes length of stay, primary reason for visit, and planning time frame. Length of stay has increased slightly with the addition of about one-half of a day. Leisure remains the primary reason for visit and the number of respondents indicating this has increased since 2001. The planning time frame has decreased from one to two weeks (now about 10 weeks). Also, the Internet appears to have moved to a much more important role for both trip planning and awareness.

Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen possesses many attractive features to draw visitors, many of which are important to visitors. To maximize tourism benefits, extended stays that highlight the experiences visitors seek in nature/cultural, motors and sports, and active recreation areas is encouraged.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Survey Instrument

**University of Minnesota Tourism Center
Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile Survey**

Is Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area your primary destination for this trip? (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						If NO, what is your final destination for this trip?			
If YES, which community is your primary destination? (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Detroit Lakes <input type="checkbox"/> Frazee <input type="checkbox"/> Mahnomen <input type="checkbox"/> White Earth <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____									
What is the primary reason that you made this trip to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area? (Mark ONE) <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Business / convention / meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Combined business and pleasure <input type="checkbox"/> Education / learning <input type="checkbox"/> Pleasure or recreation </div> <div style="width: 33%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Festival / special event: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Just passing through <input type="checkbox"/> Own a vacation home in the area <input type="checkbox"/> Personal: wedding, medical, reunion, etc. </div> <div style="width: 33%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sporting event / tournament <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting friends / relatives <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ </div> </div>									

	<u>1. In general, how important is EACH feature in choosing a place to visit?</u>					<u>2. Did you experience this feature on THIS trip?</u>		<u>3. For each feature you experienced, how satisfied were you with this feature on your trip to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area?</u>			
	Not at all important		Very important		No preference	Yes	No	Not at all satisfied		Very satisfied	
American Indian heritage	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Antiques	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
ATV trails	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Auto racing	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Biking trails	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Bird / wildlife viewing	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
BMX racing	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Boating	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Camping	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Canoeing/kayaking	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Casino or gaming	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
County parks / forest	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Cross-country skiing	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Cultural sites or tours	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Entertainment / nightlife	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Fall colors	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Farmers market	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Festival or special event	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Flea market	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Fishing	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Golf courses	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Hiking trails	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Historical buildings/sites	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Hunting	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Local arts and crafts	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Lots of activities / attractions	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Museums	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Natural environment	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Performing arts	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Photography	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Scenic drives	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Shopping	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Sightseeing	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Small town feel	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Snowmobiling	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Specific accommodation	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Sporting tournaments	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
State / federal wildlife refuge	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
State parks	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Swimming	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4
Waterpark	1	2	3	4	N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4

For Official Use: Date _____ Season _____ Site type _____ Site name _____

Is this your first trip to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area? (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No																																															
NEW VISITORS		How would you rate your first trip to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area? (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Worse than I expected <input type="checkbox"/> Exactly what I expected <input type="checkbox"/> Better than I expected																																													
REPEAT VISITORS		How many trips have you taken to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area in the last year? _____ trips _____ don't know How many years have you been coming to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area? _____ years _____ don't know																																													
		What was your first introduction to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen? (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Festival / event <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting friends / relatives <input type="checkbox"/> Born / raised here <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____																																													
		How many people are in your travel party (including yourself)? _____ people		Are there international visitors in your travel group? (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		How many total nights will you be away from home on this trip? _____ nights Write "0" if this is a day trip		How many of these nights will be in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area? _____ nights Write "0" if this is a day trip																																							
If you are staying overnight in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area, how many nights are you staying in each type of accommodation? If NONE, write "0."					Please estimate the amount of money <u>YOU</u> spent in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area in the last 24 hours. If NONE, write "0." Identify ALL expenses (e.g., doctor).																																										
<table border="0" style="width:100%;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">Number of nights</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hotel / motel</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bed & Breakfast</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resort</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cabin rental</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RV Park</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public/private campground</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Home of friend or relative</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacation home of friend / relative</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Your own vacation home</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other _____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> </table>						Number of nights	Hotel / motel	_____	Bed & Breakfast	_____	Resort	_____	Cabin rental	_____	RV Park	_____	Public/private campground	_____	Home of friend or relative	_____	Vacation home of friend / relative	_____	Your own vacation home	_____	Other _____	_____	<table border="0" style="width:100%;"> <tr> <td>Lodging</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Restaurant food / beverages</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Groceries</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transportation (gas, parking, repairs, etc.)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shopping (souvenirs, gifts, film, etc.)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recreation / attractions / entertainment / casinos</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Guides / outfitting</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other: _____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> </table>					Lodging	\$ _____	Restaurant food / beverages	\$ _____	Groceries	\$ _____	Transportation (gas, parking, repairs, etc.)	\$ _____	Shopping (souvenirs, gifts, film, etc.)	\$ _____	Recreation / attractions / entertainment / casinos	\$ _____	Guides / outfitting	\$ _____	Other: _____	\$ _____
	Number of nights																																														
Hotel / motel	_____																																														
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Your own vacation home	_____																																														
Other _____	_____																																														
Lodging	\$ _____																																														
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Shopping (souvenirs, gifts, film, etc.)	\$ _____																																														
Recreation / attractions / entertainment / casinos	\$ _____																																														
Guides / outfitting	\$ _____																																														
Other: _____	\$ _____																																														
					If you have NOT been in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area _____ hours for 24 hours, indicate the number of hours included in this spending estimate																																										
How far in advance did you decide to take this trip? _____ days					How far in advance did you make lodging reservations? _____ days (If no lodging reservations, write "0")																																										
How important were the following information sources in creating awareness of the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area and in helping plan your trip to the area?					To CREATE AWARENESS of this area Not at all important Very important		To PLAN this trip Not at all important Very important																																								
Area tourism information (Chamber, CVB)					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Article / documentary / news / TV special					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Automobile club (e.g., AAA)					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Billboard					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Direct mail					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Internet					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Newspaper / magazine ads					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Previous visit					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Radio / TV ads					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Recommendation from a business					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Recommendation from a friend / relative					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Recommendation from an employer					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Sport show					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
State tourism information					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Travel agency					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Visitor / welcome center					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
Other _____					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4																																			
How likely are you to return to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area in...					Definitely not	Probably not	Not sure	Probably will	Definitely will																																						
The next year					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																																						
The next five years					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																																						
How interested would you be in returning to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area in each season?																																															
Not at all interested Very interested					Not at all interested Very interested																																										
Winter	1	2	3	4	Summer	1	2	3	4																																						
Spring	1	2	3	4	Fall	1	2	3	4																																						
Which best describes your household? (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Couple (children under 18) <input type="checkbox"/> Single (children under 18) <input type="checkbox"/> Couple (grown children) <input type="checkbox"/> Single (grown children) <input type="checkbox"/> Couple (no children) <input type="checkbox"/> Single (no children) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____					What is your annual household income (to the nearest \$1,000) \$ _____, 000				In what year were you born? 19 _____																																						
Gender (Mark ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male					What is your home zip code? _____																																										

APPENDIX B

Survey Intercept Sites

Accommodations

AmericInn, Detroit Lakes
Holiday Inn, Detroit Lakes
Ice Cracking Resort, Ponsford
Lakecrest Resort, Detroit Lakes
The Lodge on Lake Detroit, Detroit Lakes
Long Lake Campsite, Detroit Lakes
Shooting Star Hotel, Mahnomen
Super 8, Detroit Lakes
WE Fest Campground, Detroit Lakes

Attractions

Detroit Lakes Curling Club, Detroit Lakes
Detroit Lakes Farmer's Market, Detroit Lakes
Historic Holmes Theater, Detroit Lakes
K & K Tubing, Detroit Lakes
Shady Hollow Flea Market, Detroit Lakes
Shooting Star Casino, Mahnomen
Shooting Star Event Center, Mahnomen
Fishing Pier on Little Detroit Lake, Detroit Lakes

Events

10,000 Lakes Festival, Detroit Lakes
Becker County Fair, Detroit Lakes
Dick Beardsley Marathon, Detroit Lakes
Detroit Lakes Snowmobile Race, Detroit Lakes
Family Jam, Detroit Lakes
Festival of Birds, Detroit Lakes
Frazee Turkey Days, Frazee
Laddies Loppet Mountain Bike Race, Callaway
Pine to Palm Golf Tournament, Detroit Lakes
Polar Plunge, Detroit Lakes
Northwest Water Carnival, Detroit Lakes
Octoberfest, Frazee
Street Faire at the Lakes, Detroit Lakes
WE Fest, Detroit Lakes
White Earth Pow-Wow, White Earth

Retail

Cenex, Detroit Lakes
Lakes Liquor Store, Detroit Lakes
Walmart Supercenter, Detroit Lakes
Washington Square Mall, Detroit Lakes

Restaurant

Country Kitchen, Detroit Lakes
Fireside Restaurant, Detroit Lakes
Zorbaz, Detroit Lakes

Appendix C

Front End Questionnaire

Date: _____

Location: _____

1. Do you live six or more months of the year in the area? ☐ Yes (thank/terminate) ☐ No (continue)
2. What is the main purpose of your trip? ☐ Business ☐ Pleasure ☐ Both
3. What is your zip code? _____
4. Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female
5. Would you complete this questionnaire for the University of Minnesota? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Appendix D

Tables and Figures

Table 1. Response rate among visitors to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen, 2006-2007.

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Total Parties Contacted	1450	
Residents	800	55.2
Visitors	650	44.8
Refusals	89	
Acceptance	561	86.3
Unusable	2	
Total Visitor Questionnaires	559	86.0

Table 2. Completed responses by season among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Summer	229	41.1
Fall	118	21.1
Winter	108	19.3
Spring	104	18.6
Total	559	100.0

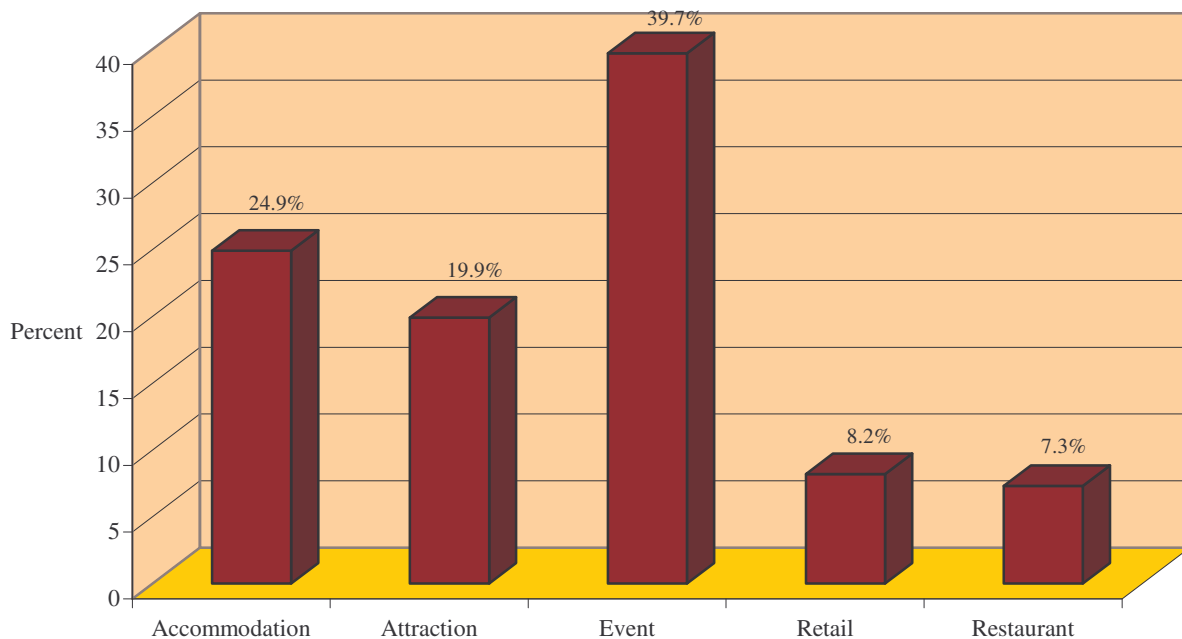


Figure 1. Location of respondent contact sites, in percent, for the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (n=559).

Table 3. Demographic characteristics among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	321	40.6
Female	219	59.4
Total	540	100.0
Age (\bar{M}=46.6; S.D.=15.1)		
18-30	94	17.8
31-40	105	20.0
41-50	116	22.0
51-60	113	21.4
61-70	69	12.7
71 or older	30	5.7
Total	527	100.0

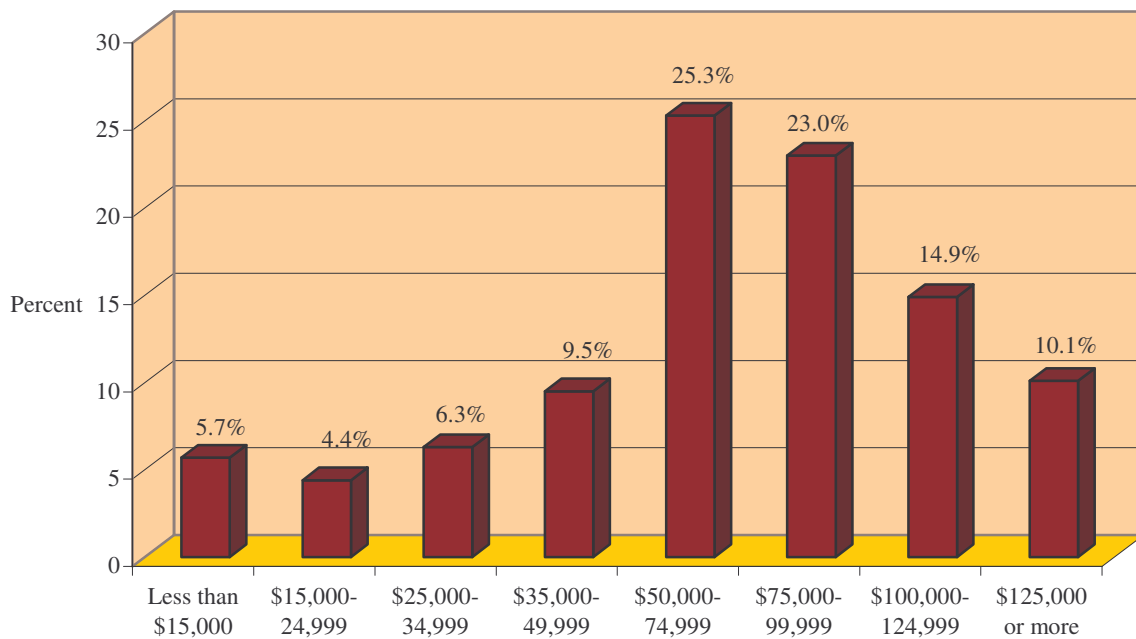


Figure 2. Annual household income among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (n=348).

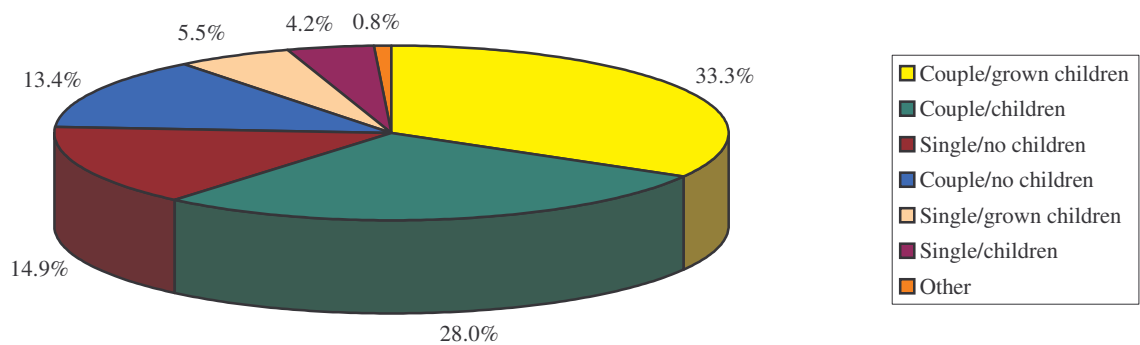


Figure 3. Household composition among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (n=529).

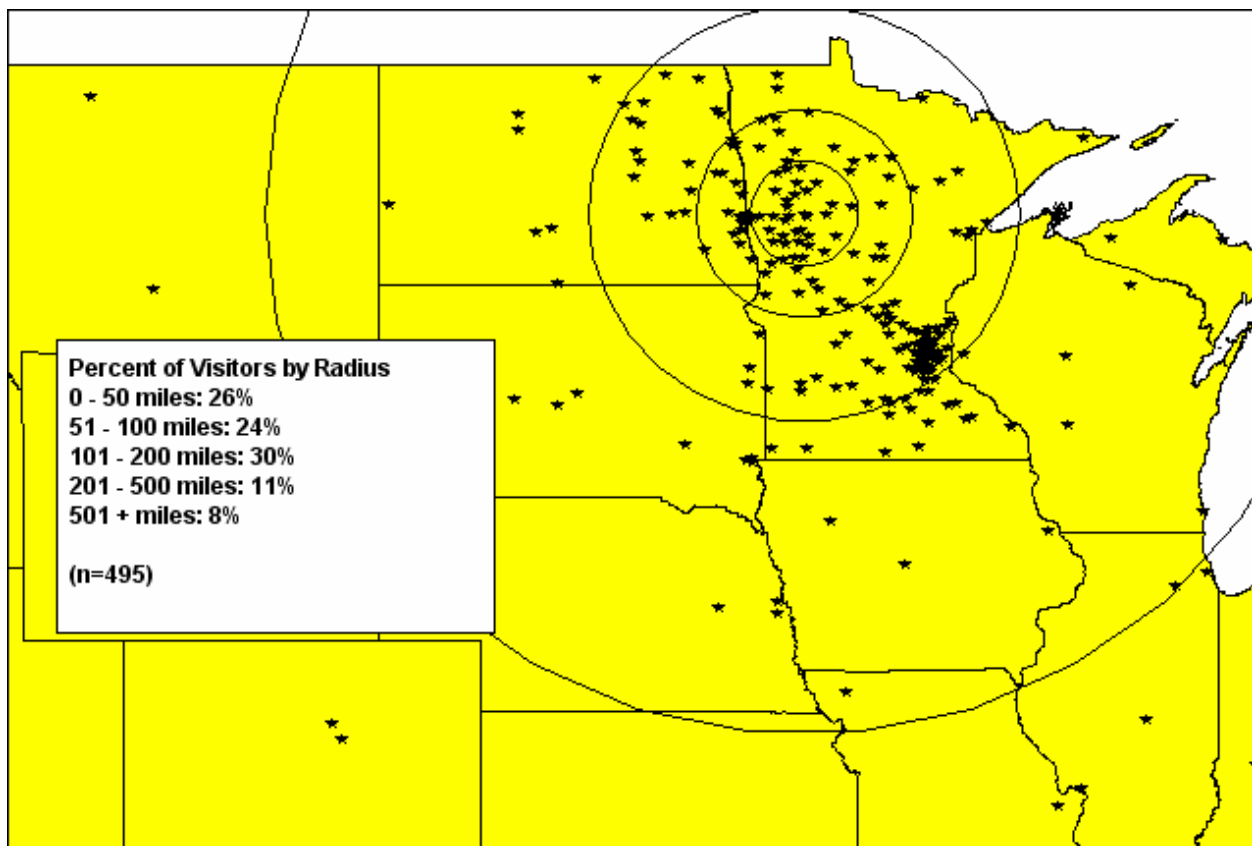


Figure 4. Radius map of respondent's primary residence among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

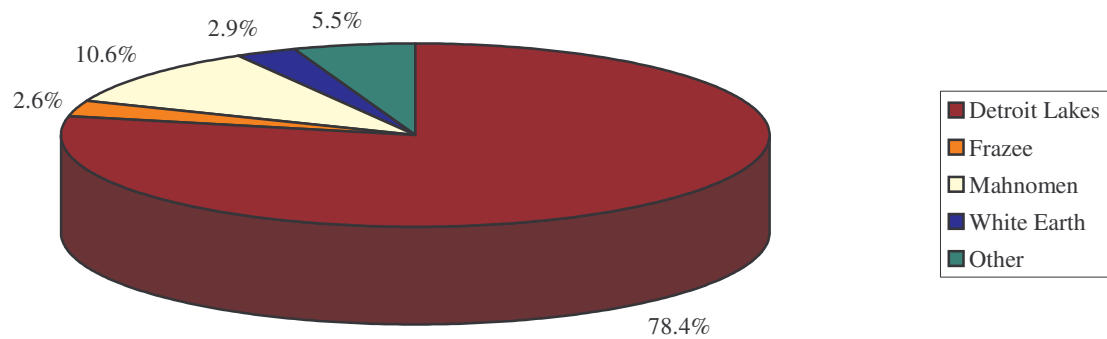


Figure 5. Primary destination in the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen area among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (n=379).

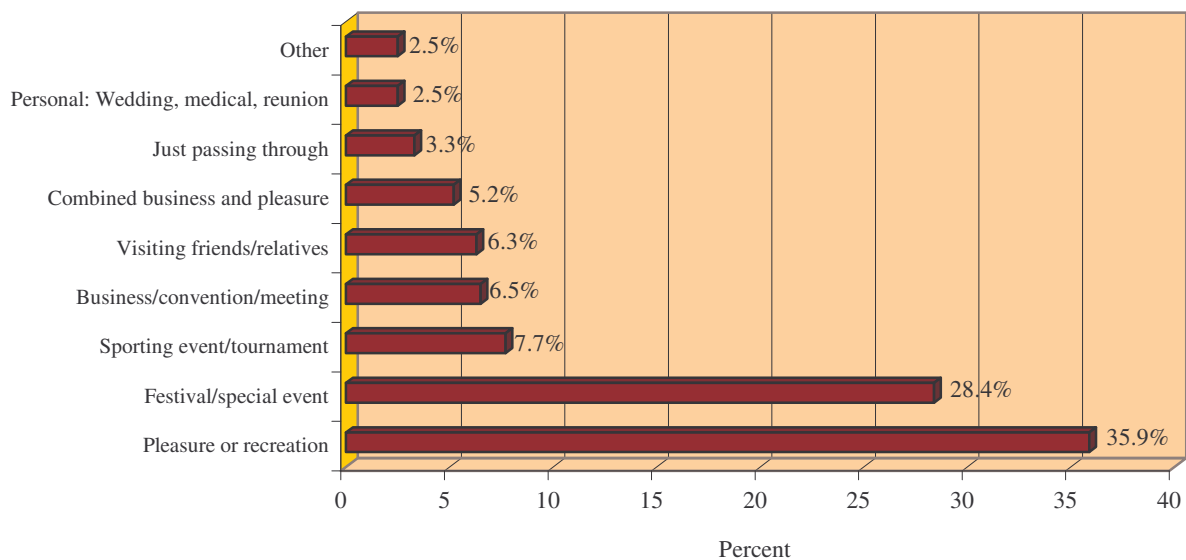


Figure 6. Primary reason for visiting Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (n=521).

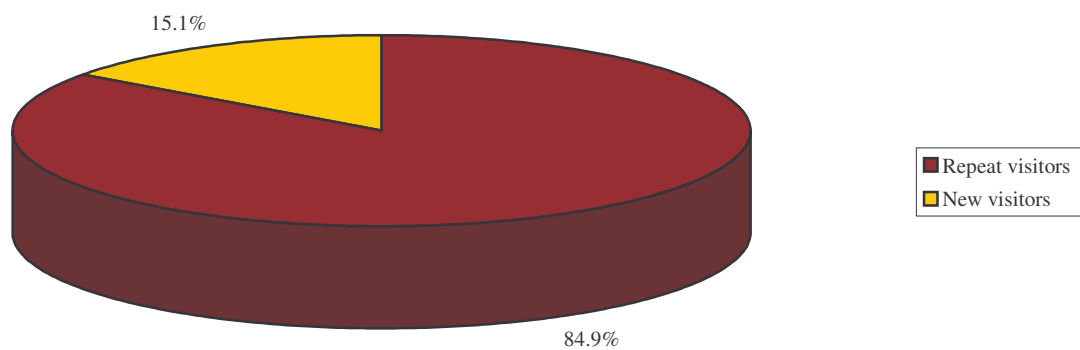


Figure 7. Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen visitation history among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (n=491).

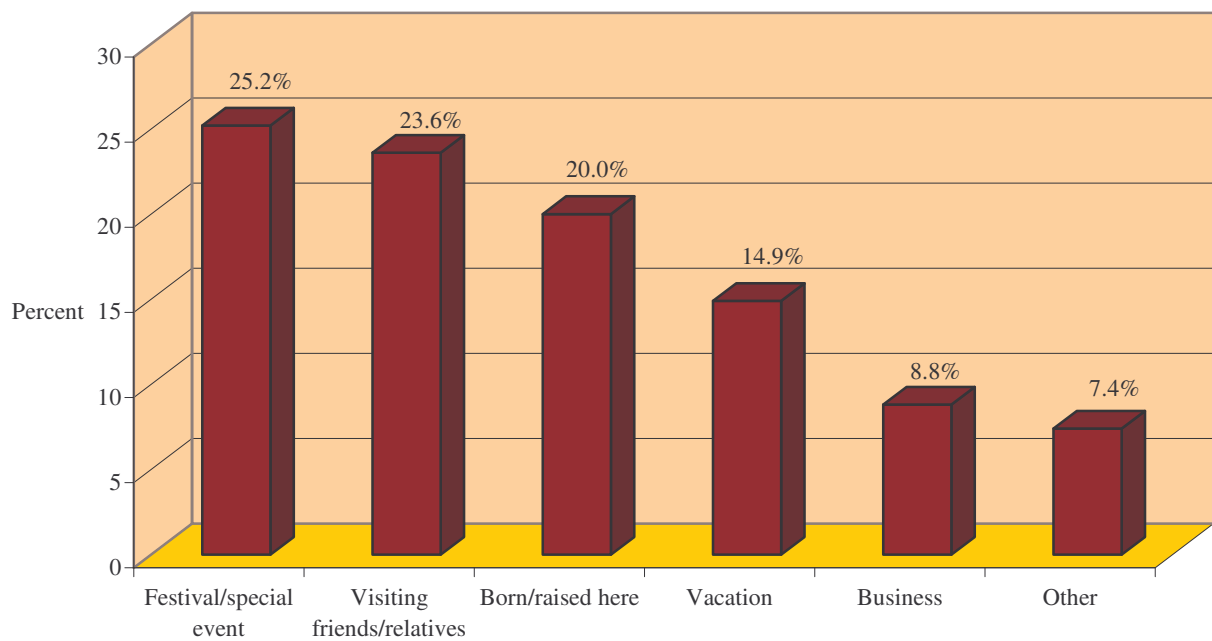


Figure 8. Respondent's first introduction to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (n=444).

Table 4. Information sources among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

	Create awareness		Plan trip	
	M¹	S.D.	M¹	S.D.
Previous visit	2.8	1.3	2.7	1.4
Friend/relative recommendation	2.6	1.4	2.5	1.4
Internet	2.5	1.3	2.3	1.4
Newspaper/magazine ad	2.2	1.2	1.8	1.2
Article/documentary	1.9	1.2	1.6	1.1
Area tourism information (Chamber/CVB)	1.8	1.1	1.5	1.0
Direct mail	1.8	1.1	1.5	1.0
Radio/TV ads	1.8	1.1	1.6	1.0
State tourism information	1.8	1.1	1.5	1.0
Billboard	1.6	1.0	1.3	0.8
Visitor/welcome center	1.6	1.1	1.4	0.9
Business recommendation	1.5	1.0	1.4	0.9
Employer recommendation	1.5	1.0	1.4	0.9
Travel agency	1.5	0.9	1.3	0.7
Other	1.5	1.1	1.5	1.0
Automobile club	1.4	0.8	1.2	0.7
Sport show	1.4	0.9	1.3	0.7

¹ Rated on a scale from 1 to 4, where 1=not at all important and 4=very important

Table 5. Importance and satisfaction of trip destination features among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

	Importance (in general)		Experienced on this trip	Level of Satisfaction	
	<u>M</u> ¹	S.D.	Percent (%)	<u>M</u> ²	S.D.
Festival or special event	3.1	1.1	49.2	3.7	0.7
Scenic drives	3.1	1.1	34.9	3.6	0.6
Entertainment / nightlife	3.0	1.2	46.5	3.5	0.6
Fall colors	3.0	1.1	11.2	3.3	1.0
Lots of activities / attractions	3.0	1.1	32.4	3.5	0.7
Natural environment	3.0	1.2	34.5	3.6	0.6
Sightseeing	3.0	1.1	31.8	3.5	0.7
Boating	2.9	1.2	19.5	3.7	0.6
Camping	2.9	1.2	23.3	3.5	0.8
County parks / forest	2.9	1.2	17.1	3.3	0.9
Small town feel	2.9	1.2	42.9	3.5	0.7
State parks	2.9	1.2	8.6	3.5	0.9
Shopping	2.7	1.2	37.8	3.2	0.9
Swimming	2.7	1.2	27.1	3.5	0.7
Fishing	2.6	1.3	14.7	3.4	0.9
Bird / wildlife viewing	2.5	1.2	19.1	2.1	1.1
Cultural sites or tours	2.5	1.2	9.4	3.3	0.8
Historical buildings/sites	2.5	1.2	6.8	3.2	0.8
Local arts and crafts	2.5	1.2	22.4	3.5	0.7
State / federal wildlife refuge	2.5	1.3	9.1	3.4	0.8
Farmers market	2.4	1.2	11.9	3.3	1.0
Hiking trails	2.4	1.2	9.0	3.4	0.7
Performing arts	2.4	1.2	16.2	3.7	0.8
Photography	2.4	1.2	15.0	3.4	0.9
Specific accommodation	2.4	1.3	19.4	2.2	1.2
Flea market	2.3	1.2	15.2	3.3	0.9
Canoeing/kayaking	2.2	1.2	5.1	3.3	0.9
Casino or gaming	2.2	1.2	21.2	3.1	0.9
Golf courses	2.2	1.3	10.1	3.6	0.6
Museums	2.2	1.1	4.4	3.4	0.6
Sporting tournaments	2.2	1.3	12.7	3.5	0.8
Waterpark	2.2	1.1	2.5	2.9	1.1
Biking trails	2.1	1.2	9.1	3.2	0.9
Antiques	2.0	1.2	14.9	3.2	0.7
Hunting	2.0	1.3	5.1	3.4	1.0
Snowmobiling	1.9	1.1	3.6	3.1	1.0
Cross-country skiing	1.8	1.1	1.1	3.0	1.4
Auto racing	1.7	1.1	2.3	2.8	1.0
ATV trails	1.6	1.0	4.3	2.7	0.9
American Indian heritage	1.5	1.0	11.3	3.0	1.0
BMX racing	1.3	0.8	0.9	3.0	1.0

¹ Rated on a scale of 1 to 4 (1=not at all important, 4=very important)

² Rated on a scale of 1 to 4 (1=not at all satisfied, 4=very satisfied)

Table 6. Accommodation types and duration of stay among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

	Frequency	Percent ¹ (%)	Number of nights	
			M	S.D.
Hotel	186	33.3	2.0	1.2
Campground	66	11.8	3.7	1.5
Home of friend/relative	41	7.3	2.9	2.2
Vacation home of friend/relative	39	7.0	3.0	2.0
Resort	22	3.9	3.2	1.9
RV park	20	3.6	3.3	1.6
Cabin rental	19	3.4	4.1	2.1
Own vacation home	14	2.5	5.6	4.6
Other	11	2.0	4.1	1.8
B & B	4	0.7	2.0	0.8

¹Based on the entire sample.

Table 7. Personal expenditures in Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen communities among respondents to the Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007 (in US\$).

	M	S.D.	Range
Lodging (n=213)	105.54	56.62	0-250
Restaurant food and beverages (n=240)	48.33	53.09	0-200
Recreation (n=231)	39.58	57.23	0-200
Transportation (n=298)	36.88	38.09	0-150
Shopping (n=245)	36.74	50.75	0-200
Groceries (n=240)	30.42	42.05	0-150
Other (n=104)	2.36	5.24	0-15
Guides/outfitting (n=142)	0.22	1.34	0-10

Table 8. Factor loadings of important destination feature items among respondents to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

	Nature/ Cultural Tourist	Motors & Sports	Active Recreation
Scenic drives	.83		
Natural environment	.78		
Sightseeing	.78		
Small town feel	.74		
State parks	.72		
Fall colors	.70		
State / federal wildlife refuge	.68		
Photography	.63		
Antiques	.50		
Golf courses		.74	
Hunting		.74	
Fishing		.71	
Sporting tournaments		.69	
Canoeing/kayaking			.80
Cross-country skiing			.73
Biking trails			.69
Camping			.60
Waterpark			.53
Scale Mean ¹	2.8	2.4	2.3
Alpha (α)	.91	.76	.79
Variance explained (%)	58.69		

¹ Measured on a scale of 1-4, where 1 =not at all important and 4=very important

Table 9. Correlations of destination features factors and information sources among respondents to Detroit Lakes-Mahnomen Visitor Profile study, 2006-2007.

	Nature/ Cultural	Motors & Sports	Active Recreation
Area tourism information (Chamber/CVB)	.31**	.26**	.23**
Article/documentary	.38**	.25**	.25**
Automobile club	.17**	.20**	.20**
Billboard	.26**	.23**	.26**
Direct mail	.25**	.23**	.19**
Internet	.36**	.28**	.37**
Newspaper/magazine ad	.44**	.35**	.35**
Previous visit	.46**	.36**	.30**
Radio/TV ads	.27**	.27**	.24**
Business recommendation	.18**	.20**	.23**
Friend/relative recommendation	.36**	.26**	.23**
Employer recommendation	.14**	.20**	.23**
Sport show	.16**	.22**	.25**
State tourism information	.31**	.24**	.24**
Travel agency	.18**	.18**	.20**
Visitor/welcome center	.33**	.25**	.26**
Other	.31**	.33**	.28**

**p<.01; *p<.05